

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 312988
ORIGIN EB-07

INFO OCT-01 IO-13 ISO-00 /021 R

66011
DRAFTED BY EB/OT/GCP:JSLATTERY;JM
APPROVED BY EB/OT/GCP:JSLATTERY
-----300407Z 027426 /73

R 292348Z DEC 76
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO USDEL MTN GENEVA

UNCLAS STATE 312988

FOL REPEAT BANGKOK 34588 ACTION SECSTATE INFO GENEVA
JAKARTA KULA LUMPUR MANILA SINGAPORE DTD 27 DEC.

QUOTE

UNCLAS BANGKOK 34588

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: ETRD, ASEAN, TH
SUBJECT: MTN TROPICAL PRODUCTS NEGOTIATIONS

REF.: (A) JAKARTA 16383, (B) GENEVA 9226

1. AT REQUEST OF MOFA CHARGE CALLED ON NITSAI WETCHACHIWA,
DIRECTOR GENERAL OF INFORMATION AND ASEAN DIVISIONS, MINISTRY
OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, MORNING OF DECEMBER 27. NITSAI HANDED CHARGE
AIDE-MEMOIRE RELATING TO SUBJECT NEGOTIATIONS. AS THAI TEXT
DIFFERS TO SOME EXTENT FROM JOINT MEMORANDUM TRANSMITTED REFTEL
AIDEMEMOIRE IS QUOTED BELOW IN ITS ENTIRETY.

2. BEGIN QUOTE. 1. WITH REFERENCE TO THE CURRENT NEGOTIATIONS
ON TROPICAL PRODUCTS IN THE MULTILATERAL TRADE NEGOTIATIONS,
AND IN PURSUANCE OF THE CHAIRMAN'S SUMMING-UP AND RECORD OF DE-
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CISIONS AT THE TROPICAL PRODUCTS GROUP MEETING AT GENEVA, ON
18-20 OCTOBER 1976, THAILAND, TOGETHER WITH OTHER ASEAN COUN-
TRIES, MAKE THIS SUBMISSION WITH A VIEW TO THE IMPROVEMENT AND
EARLY IMPLEMENTATION BY THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT OF ITS
OFFER IN RESPONSE TO ASEAN REQUESTS. THE ASEAN COUNTRIES ALSO
WISH TO DRAW ATTENTION TO THE COMMITMENTS UNDERTAKEN BY DEVEL-

OPED COUNTRIES IN PART IV OF THE GATT WE WELL AS THE TOKYO DECLARATION. THEY WOULD ALSO RECALL THAT AS EARLY AS 1963 THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT ENDORSED THE OBJECTIVE OF DUTY-FREE ENTRY FOR TROPICAL PRODUCTS.

2. THE ASEAN MEMBERS CONSIDER THE UNITED STATES A LEADING PARTICIPANT IN THE MULTILATERAL TRADE NEGOTIATIONS, THE NEGOTIATIONS HAVING BEEN INITIATED BY THE JOINT UNITED STATES-JAPAN STATEMENT ON INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC RELATIONS IN FEBRUARY 1972, AND THE ASEAN COUNTRIES NOTE WITH APPRECIATION THE MEASURES THAT HAD BEEN TAKEN BY THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT IN PROMOTING CLOSER ECONOMIC COOPERATION WITH ASEAN, INCLUDING ITS POSITIVE ATTITUDE TOWARDS THE ASEAN REQUEST LIST ON TROPICAL PRODUCTS. HOWEVER, THE ASEAN COUNTRIES WOULD WISH TO POINT OUT THAT THE RESPONSE FROM THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT IN THE FORM OF OFFERS ON TROPICAL PRODUCTS WAS ONLY WORTH APPROXIMATELY \$104 MILLION, BASED ON UNITED STATES IMPORTS IN 1973, AS COMPARED TO THE TOTAL ASEAN REQUEST OF \$528 MILLION FOR THE SAME YEAR. FURTHERMORE, THE ASEAN COUNTRIES NOTE THAT IN MANY INSTANCES THE DEPTH OF TARIFF CUT IN THE UNITED STATES OFFER HAS BEEN RESTRICTED BY THE NEGOTIATING AUTHORITY UNDER WHICH THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT IS CURRENTLY OPERATING.

3. THE ASEAN COUNTRIES WOULD LIKE TO BRING TO THE ATTENTION OF THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT THAT REQUESTS FROM ASEAN COUNTRIES FOR A NUMBER OF IMPORTANT EXPORTS WHICH INCLUDES INTER ALIA SUGAR, TOBACCO, CANNED PINEAPPLE JUICE, TIMBER AND WOOD PRODUCTS, TUNA, ABACA PRODUCTS, NATURAL RUBBER AND RUBBER PRODUCTS, PRAWNS, SPICES, LEATHER PRODUCTS, FOOTWEAR, TEXTILES AND ELECTRONICS TO THE UNITED STATES HAD NOT BEEN ACCORDED ANY OFFER.

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THE ASEAN COUNTRIES BELIEVE THAT THERE ARE NO INSURMOUNTABLE PROBLEMS WHICH PREVENT THE UNITED STATES FROM INCLUDING THESE ITEMS IN ITS OFFER LIST AND HOPE THAT THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT WILL GIVE FURTHER CONSIDERATION TO IMPROVING ITS INITIAL OFFER.

4. ADDITIONALLY, THAILAND WISHES TO POINT OUT THAT EXISTING PREFERENTIAL TARIFF MARGINS UNDER GSP SHOULD BE BOUND AND THAT IN CASE OF EROSION OF PREFERENTIAL MARGINS, RESULTING FROM THE MFN CUTS, EFFECTIVE COMPENSATION SHOULD BE MADE.

5. AS AN IMPORTANT TRADING PARTNER OF THE UNITED STATES, THE ASEAN COUNTRIES ARE A SUBSTANTIAL MARKET FOR UNITED STATES EXPORTS WHICH AMOUNTED TO \$4.4 BILLION IN 1974. HOWEVER, EXPORTS BY ASEAN COUNTRIES TO THE UNITED STATES AMOUNTED TO ONLY \$3.4 BILLION IN THE SAME YEAR.

6. IN VIEW OF THE FOREGOING CONSIDERATIONS THE ASEAN COUNTRIES

WOULD URGE THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT TO IMPLEMENT ITS INITIAL OFFER AS EARLY AS POSSIBLE AND TO SUPPLEMENT THAT OFFER BY IMPROVING THE SCOPE AND CONTENT OF THE CONCESSIONS IN THE TROPICAL PRODUCTS GROUP TAKING INTO ACCOUNT THE DEVELOPMENT NEEDS OF THE ASEAN COUNTRIES. END QUOTE.

3. COMMENT. WORTH OF USG OFFER CITED AS \$104 MILLION IN PARA TWO OF THAI TEXT IS \$190 MILLION IN INDONESIAN MEMORANDUM. RTG AIDE-MEMOIRE ALSO INCLUDES A NEW CONDITION IN PARA 4 CONCERNING COMPENSATION SHOULD EROSION OF PREFERENTIAL TARIFF MARGINS OCCUR.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: ECONOMIC COOPERATION, TROPICAL PRODUCTS, TEXT, DIPLOMATIC COMMUNICATIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 29 DEC 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: n/a
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 JAN 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976STATE312988
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: JSLATTERY;JM
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760475-1038
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t1976125/aaaaaemf.tel
Line Count: 129
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ORIGIN EB
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 77 JAKARTA 16383, 77 GENEVA 9226
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: morefirh
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 24 MAY 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <24 MAY 2004 by hattaycs>; APPROVED <05 JAN 2005 by morefirh>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: MTN TROPICAL PRODUCTS NEGOTIATIONS
TAGS: ETRD, TH, ASEAN
To: MTN GENEVA
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006